

Please read ALL of the following essays from *Writing America* (Jolliffe, David A. and Hephzibah Roskelly. Pearson: 2014):

- Occom, Samson. From *A Short Narrative of My life*. Pg. 226
- Apess, William. From *A Son of the Forest*. Pg. 359
- Jacobs, Harriet Ann. From *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. Pg. 564
- Momaday, N. Scott. From *The Way to Rainy Mountain*. Pg. 599
- Addams, Jane. From *The Long Road of Woman's Memory*. Pg. 671
- Sa, Zitkala (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin). From *The School Days of an Indian Girl*. Pg. 680
- Antin, Mary. "The Promise of Free Education." Pg. 691
- Wing, Yung. From *My Life in China and America*. Pg. 697
- Tan, Amy. "Mother Tongue." Pg. 922
- Nye, Naomi Shihab. "One Moment on Top of the Earth." Pg. 936
- Rodrigues, Richard. From *Hunger for Memory*. Pg. 940
- Min, Anchee. "Footprints on the Flag." Pg. 952

Each of these twelve essays falls into the genre known as "personal essay" or "memoir." As you read, annotate, looking specifically for clever organization, structure, and effective strategies as well as moments where the author reveals something about him or her self. Please **write a journal entry** for each essay describing *how the author structures the piece, any particularly effective strategies (writing techniques), and what truths about the author's personality, past, or interest are revealed (see attached sample for further assistance)*. Each entry should be hand written, legible, and at least four sentences long. Be prepared for an assessment over ALL of these essays in the first week of school.

After you have read each of these memoirs, please construct one of your own. Read the instructions below for the 2013-2014 Common Ap. essay requirements and choose one of the prompts to which you would like to respond. Please be creative about how your **best represent yourself and your strengths**. Consider the memoirs you have read and their creative organization and presentation when constructing your response. Essay must be typed, double spaced, and generally follow MLA guidelines. Essay will be due the first week of class.

Instructions. The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. *What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores?* Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so. (The application won't accept a response shorter than 250 words.)

- Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn?
- Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
- Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?
- Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

Writing Sample: AP Language Summer Reading Journal Entries

Maggie Philpot (name)

Mrs. Philpot (instructor's name)

AP Language and Composition (course title)

May 14, 2013 (date)

“Shooting an Elephant” by George Orwell

This piece about Orwell's experience in Burma is told as a first-person narrative. Beginning the story with the statement, “I was hated by large numbers of people,” is particularly attention-grabbing, painting the author very quickly as someone who is in a difficult or uncomfortable position. He goes on to describe what life was like as a person of his position in Burma, providing examples such as “when a nimble Burman tripped me up on the football field and the referee...looked the other way.” In the second paragraph he admits that, ironically, he is already opposed the imperialism he is a part of, which affirms that he is a thoughtful and conflicted person in a difficult and unpleasant situation. While building up the momentum and drama of the elephant rampage, the author reveals more of himself. Specifically, he hints at the impossible position he is in as a white man in a leadership position in the east. In fact, he realized at the very moment when he raises the gun that, “I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow faces behind.” The gruesome details of the death of the elephant allow the reader to put himself in the place of the author as he feels compelled to carry out this barbarous act. We feel sorry for Orwell even as he admits in the end, “I often wondered whether any of the others grasped that I had done it solely to avoid looking a fool.” These moments of honest reflection in the midst of a dramatic story reveal the author's honest self-awareness both then (at the time of the elephant shooting) and now (as he looks back on the event).

Note: Your analysis does not have to be this long, but it does need to be thorough. The chief questions to ask yourself are, “What makes this essay work?” and “Why?” Be as specific as possible. It definitely helps to annotate each essay as you are reading, looking for those moments that are particularly creative or moments that provide significant insight into the author's personality or character. Also remember that these are journal entries and therefore somewhat informal. This means that you may make use of first person in your own reflection.